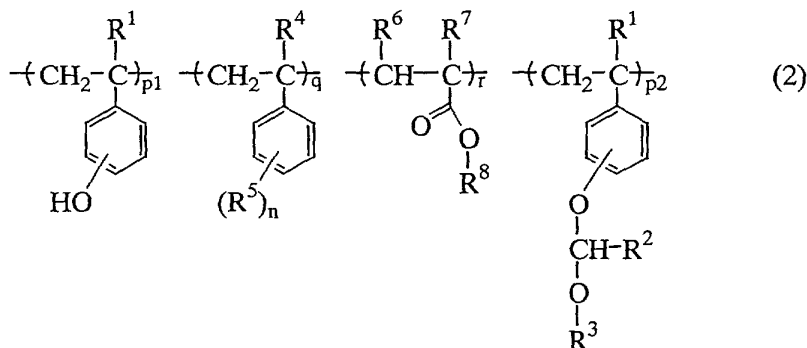
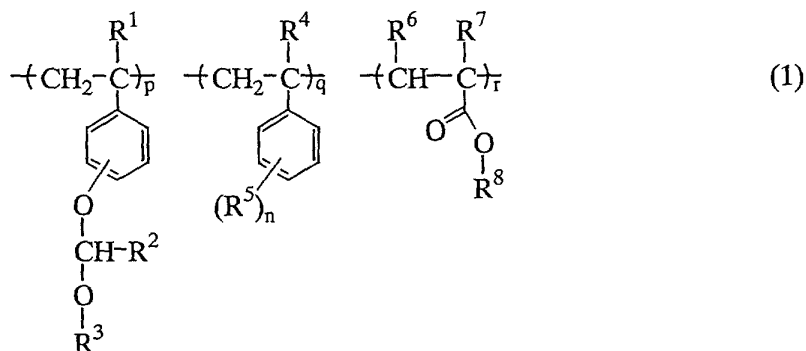


ABSTRACT

A polymer comprising recurring units of formula (2) is prepared by effecting deblocking reaction on a polymer comprising recurring units of formula (1) in the presence of an acid catalyst.



In the formulae, R¹ and R⁴ are H or methyl, R² and R³ are C1-C10 alkyl, or R² and R³ may form a ring, R⁵ is H, hydroxyl, alkyl, alkoxy or halogen, R⁶ and R⁷ are H, methyl, alkoxycarbonyl, cyano or halogen, R⁸ is C4-C20 tertiary alkyl, n is an integer of 0 to 4, p is a positive number, q and r each are 0 or a positive number, exclusive of q=r=0, p₁ is a positive number, p₂ is 0 or a positive number, and p₁+p₂ = p. The polymer thus produced has a narrower molecular weight distribution than polymers produced by the prior art methods. A resist composition comprising the polymer as a base resin has advantages including a

dissolution contrast of resist film, high resolution,
exposure latitude, process flexibility, good pattern profile
after exposure, and minimized line edge roughness.